

PUBLIC SAFETY & PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE
Of the
Suffolk County Legislature

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Public Safety & Public Information Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on **June 15, 2004**.

Members Present:

Legislator Angie Carpenter • Chairperson

Legislator Pete O'Leary • Vice•Chair

Legislator David Bishop

Legislator William Lindsay

Legislator Andrew Crecca

Legislator Daniel Losquadro

Legislator Lynne Nowick

Also In Attendance:

Mea Knapp • Counsel to the Legislature

Alexandra Sullivan • Chief Deputy Clerk/Suffolk County Legislature

Doug Sutherland • Aide to Legislator Caracappa

Linda Bay • Aide to Presiding Officer Caracappa

Frank Tassone • Aide to Legislator Crecca

Glenn Pichardo • Aide to Legislator Bishop

Eric Brown • Aide to Legislator Schneiderman

Joanne Doering • Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office

Joe Muncy • Budget Analyst/Budget Review Office

Ben Zwirn • Assistant County Executive

Adam Santiago • County Executive's Office/Intergovernmental Relations.

Matt Cohen • County Executive's Office/Intergovernmental Relations.

Donald Sullivan • Undersheriff/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office

Walter Denzler • Undersheriff/Suffolk County sheriff's Office

Alan Otto • Chief of Staff/Suffolk County Sheriff's Office
Richard Dormer • Commissioner/Suffolk County Police Department
Robert Moore • Chief Deputy Commissioner/Suffolk County Police Dept
Cecelia Clausing • Commissioner's Office/Suffolk County Police Dept
Jack Ozer • Sergeant/Suffolk County Police Department
Debbie Eppel • Public Information Office
Bill Ellis • Director of Public Relations/Correction Officer's Assoc.
Arty Cliff • President/Superior Officer's Association
Tom Muratore • Vice•President/Police Benevolent Association
Bill Tricarico • Police Benevolent Association
Dave Davis • Police Benevolent Association
Lynne Bizzarro • Chief Deputy County Attorney
Basia Deren•Braddish • County Attorney's Office
Anthony Dragone • Facilities Space Manager/Dept of Public Works
Cindy Scesny • District Attorney's Office
Dr. Jeane Alicandro • Director/Emergency Medical Services•DHS
Dave Brenner • Chairperson/Regional Emergency Medical Services Council
Guy Cassara • Regional Emergency Medical Services Council.
Joel Vetter • Holbrook Fire Department
Barbara Rivadeneyra • President/Probation Officer's Association
Daniel DelValle • Probation Officer's Association
Ken Glogg • Montauk Fire Department
Suzanne Dayton • East Hampton Ambulance
William Gilman • Chief/East Northport Fire Department
Charles Warringer • Commissioner/East Northport Fire Department
James McCormack • Resident of East Northport
Elie Seidman•Smith • Director/Community Service Program/ARC
All Other Interested Parties

Minutes Taken By:

Alison Mahoney • Court Stenographer

(* The meeting was called to order at 1:19 P.M. *)

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

We will begin and I would ask that Legislator Bishop please lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Salutation

Good afternoon.

LEG. CRECCA:

Good afternoon.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

We have two presentations this afternoon, and actually Legislator Bishop had requested that we invite Dr. Alicandro and another gentleman whose name escapes me; we did try to contact him and did not receive a response so I assume that he is not coming, the gentleman from the State. But before we start with that presentation, I would invite Commissioner Dormer to come forward, I guess there are two issues on the agenda today that we'd like to speak to the Commissioner about.

LEG. BISHOP:

The State EMS Director is here, New York State.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Oh, okay.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Thank you very much. Is this thing on?

LEG. LINDSAY:

Yes.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Okay, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Good afternoon. The first issue I would just ask you to talk about, probably the easier of the

two, is Resolution 1639, the MOU with the FBI that the County Executive is requesting that we approve for the Firearms Range, the Suffolk County Firearms Range and Bunker in West Hampton. And I know there was some concern about who was using it and so forth, perhaps you can clarify it and make it a little easier for us today.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yes. The FBI has been using the range for years, they do qualify out there. They have a bunker where they keep some property, not ammunition but range equipment and the roof is leaking, it's in disrepair, so they have agreed to expend some monies to repair this thing. It doesn't increase their usage of the range, I want to assure all the County agencies that utilize the range for qualification that they will have first preference, I'd want that on record. It was requested that I do that, we don't have any problem with that, I have the range supervisor here today, I talked to the Chief of Support Services, there's no problem with that. So it's agreed that we can move forward with that and vote it out today.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Terrific. Legislator O'Leary.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Commissioner, this matter was addressed in the Space Management Committee and at the time, my recollection, I sit on that committee and there was no mention of part and parcel of the resolution being that the FBI utilize the range. They have been utilizing it in the past, have they not?

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yes; yes, they have.

LEG. O'LEARY:

All right. So ••

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yeah, they've utilized the range over the years and, you know, it was a relationship with the Federal government and the FBI, we've accommodated them. There was a concern that they would be utilizing it more because of this agreement, that's not true, we will still take care of

our County agencies, they'll have first preference; we're going to assure everybody that that will continue.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Okay, that was my point, that formalizing the agreement with the Feds to use the range will not preclude, you know, the other agencies within the County from ever using that range, they would still have the priority, would they not?

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yes, and that's why I wanted to go on the record today to clarify that.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Okay, thank you.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

That satisfies the concerns of some of the agencies that were concerned.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay, thank you very much, Commissioner. I know that the County Attorney's Office had requested to speak on this resolution but we'll wait till we get to it.

The other issue that I had requested that you address was the reassignment of COPE Officers to fill sector cars; I know that that seems a bit of a departure that hopefully you can clarify.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yeah, no, redeploying •• and it's not •• I should again put on the record that this is not something new, this has been done for years with COPE where they fill in a couple of days a week if it's necessary in the precinct. Precinct Commanders said that they may need a COPE Officer or two during the week when they have letter days, that means when people have •• in the regular sector cars have an extra day off; they have filled in. If you remember, some time ago, a couple of months ago we agreed that we would leave •• I agreed that we would leave COPE intact, not utilize them in this fashion. Precinct Commanders have petitioned me and said, "Look, we would like to do this, especially during the summer months, it's not going to impact on the ability of COPE to do their job, it's a minimal operational thing," and I've been assured that that's true.

So I want to let the Public Safety Committee know that the impact on COPE is not going to be severe, it's not going to impact on their ability to respond to quality of life. And it won't be happening constantly, they're telling me that they just need it on a need•for basis where they have trouble obtaining people to fill in in sector cars, they would like to do this. And it keeps the COPE people trained on, you know, sector operation, it's a good training tool, keeping everybody up•to•date on what's going on in the sectors. I see no problem with this.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

I just want to make sure I understood you correctly; you said that this is something that the Precinct Commander has requested.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yeah, Precinct Commanders want to do this. They wanted to do what they've been doing for years.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay. So they brought this to your attention that this is what they want to do.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Is to use COPE officers to fill sector cars when needed once or twice during the week in the summer time.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

That's correct. Well, not just ••

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Well, that's what you said.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yeah, especially with the summer coming up; I mean, this is our concern is the summer coming up. With all the activity that we have in the summer, we have to make sure that people that

respond to 911, the emergency calls, we have to have that up to snuff, we've got to have full compliment, it's a very busy time out there now on all the shifts. I've been monitoring the radio during the day and the evening, it's very busy, they may need to utilize somebody from COPE during the week.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

And absent that, I guess they would have to get someone in on overtime if they couldn't use the COPE officer.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Well, it's not necessarily to reduce overtime.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

No, I said absent the use of the COPE officer, I guess they would have to use someone on overtime or bring someone in on overtime.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Or use somebody in Crime Section or somewhere else. You know, again, people are on vacation in the summer, personnel becomes an issue during the three months of June, July and August, and this is when we want to make sure that our emergency response is not negatively impacted.

(*Legislator Nowick enter the meeting at 1:27 P.M.*)

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

It was my understanding that the redeployment policy that was put into effect a couple of months ago to help reduce overtime and preserve the overtime for when we needed it most in the summer, that was my understanding; that that was •• that exercise was meant to give us the flexibility in the summer when we needed it most. And now I'm hearing that in the summer we may be having COPE officers that are going to be filling sector cars so that they can answer 911 calls at a time when traditionally I know the COPE officers are needed more than ever in the summer when school is out and those kinds of quality of life issues and crimes that seem to take place, there is certainly an increase of it in the summer time.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Well, I think it should be mentioned that the regular patrol officers respond to quality of life and criminal activity, too, that's their main responsibility, as well as responding to emergency calls. I mean, that's the top priority.

I think that over the years COPE has taken on a life of its own and that COPE is seen as the number one in the precincts; COPE is not number one in the precincts, the sector cars are number one. These are the people that respond to what we call 10•8's, aided cases, people in trouble. All these incidents that come in are called into the communication system, they're tied directly to that, it's the number one priority in the precincts. We have to make sure that that's number one . I think that •• and by the way, COPE, which started under Dan Guido when I was in there as Chief of Patrol, the idea was to pick up the slack, the quality of life things that took time to work on where COPE could concentrate on this type of issues, kids hanging around in parks, constantly causing trouble, that kind of thing. But the sector cars were never divorced from this type of work and we don't want them to be divorced from it. You know, if I may mention, too, by the way, at this point, as we speak we have 152 officers, Police Officers in COPE; that is a major commitment, and that's fine.

(*Legislator Montano entered the meeting at 1:29 P.M. *)

But I want to tell you that we have decided that other units in the Police Department besides COPE have to help out the precincts during the summer months when activity is at its highest, talking about headquarters units, and we're doing that primarily to retrain our officers that are in headquarters. A lot of them have been off the street for years and over the last number of years we've put computers in the cars, we've increased technology, and we're going to reacquaint them with the Police business again by utilizing them in the precincts during the summer. And that's part of this plan to strengthen the patrol for the three months of the summer. And as you know, everybody here knows that we have an awful lot of activity in the summer; if I could just go through a quick list.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Please, I think that would be helpful.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

In May we had Memorial Day which has to be policed properly; June the 5th, North Amityville Day; June the 6th, Adelante Day; June the 12th, Wyandanch Day; June 13th, Gay Pride Parade

in Huntington. And as you know, the U.S. Open started this week, we have a commitment of a hundred officers per day, Suffolk County Police to the U.S. Open; this is a major commitment in resources, not just the money, the resources.

So we have to look at this overall and that's what we do. When I sit with the Precinct Commanders and the Chiefs, and we did, and I asked for their input into this thing on the way they manage their people, they got to be flexible with what we've got out there. If you notice, they're still doing a terrific job out there, all the parades are handled without incident, you don't see any negative publicity, you don't see the front page of Newsday blaring out that something happened at a parade. We police it properly but it takes personnel to do this and we want to make sure we do it properly.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

You can add to June 13th the Bay Shore Festival By The Bay where over 40,000 people were there ••

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

I'm sorry I don't have that one.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

There were no problems because of the police presence there, quite frankly.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yeah.

LEG. CRECCA:

And Smithtown Festival Day also.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

And Smithtown Festival Day, there's two more.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

I know I'm going to miss a lot of festivals here and, you know, if you have it in your community, you want to see these officers out there making sure that people can enjoy the day in peace with their families and that's what we want to ensure. Again, we tried to do this within the constraints of our budget, we think we can do it, we think we need this flexibility to do that.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Well, I can appreciate, you know, as a manager you need to have that flexibility. My only concern is that I was there in the days when COPE was not at the levels that it is now and it was a sorry state and I just want to make sure that we never see those dark days again because people really relate to the COPE officers, to the bike patrols. And I know that you were very definite about your commitment to COPE when you were here during the confirmation process and, in fact, you said you wanted to make sure that we have all our cars staffed properly during these times, including COPE and the Crime Section. So that's really important to us as a committee to hear that ongoing commitment. Legislator Losquadro?

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Yes. Thank you, Commissioner. Several of the points I wanted to make were already touched on, but I remember very specifically a conversation that you and I had during one of these committee hearings. As Chairwoman Carpenter said, that this overtime process would be a fluid process, that the shutdowns and the redeployment would be specifically designed to deal with the additional need for staffing during the summer months and the covering the vacation times. I specifically remember the term "fluid process" being used to be able to decide when you would be spending this money. So just to leave that out there for a second, what other departments are being used right now?

I heard you mention crime •• could you just tell me what other departments are being used in a redeployment to cover some of these short fallings?

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yes, sir. You know, I don't like to use the term short fallings.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Well, short staffings.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Well, you know, when I came in, when I came in I looked at the department over all from a lot of angles and number one was the officers that are not working on the street, what are they doing;

Can we civilianize these positions? And we have identified through the Chiefs very aggressively

97 positions that we're going to be moving forward with civilianization over the next year.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Exclusive of those ••

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

But here's the problem, here's the problem; if we want to utilize these officers, God forbid we have a terrorism attack or we have some event where we need these officers on the street, I'm finding out that they're not properly trained, they haven't been in patrol cars for years, so I said how do we correct that? And one way is to send them back into the patrol cars for retraining during the summer months when we can utilize them, we're going to utilize them in double cars where they can learn the procedures; we have a lot of double cars in the precincts. We're going to utilize them on the desks, so they're going to get retrained, it's going to be a week or two weeks, maybe ten days at the most. And I can tell you what the units are; the Academy Bureau, the people that teach our cops, not all of them will be going back at the same time, we will do it in increments; Candidate Investigation, the people that investigate for the whole County people that are being hired for jobs in Suffolk County, that's towns, villages and the County; Pistol License Section, they're going to help out, too. And even if it's only one or two people at a time, it reacquaints them with the street. You know, there's an old saying in the military, "If you're a cook you've still got to be a rifleman because you never know when you're going to have to pick that thing up and get into battle."

I believe the same concept with the policing business, we've got to get people in every section of the department able to function on the street in patrol, that means they've got to be able to use the computers, they've got to understand the aided cases, the domestic violence procedures which have changed over the years. That's the main reason that they're going back.

Will it save money? It may, it may save money but I don't know, this is not the driving force behind that. It will put more people on the street during the summer months. If anybody •• if any of you were here or at the Adelante Parade a week ago, police presence was outstanding.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

No one is questioning that. So ••

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

And there's a reason we can do that.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

COPE, the Academy Bureau, Applicant Investigation and Pistol Licensing are the four that you're drawing from ••

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Right now.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Right now.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

There may be one or two more that will be identified to me as we go along.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Right. My point to this was I just want to make sure for the safety of the people in the County that you're choosing departments within the Police Department that it will not effect their performance by taking people out of their unit during that time period. And that was my only point, that we had agreed that the redeployment process and the fluid process of using the additional overtime funds would be used so that no division within the department was short •staffed. So I just want to make sure.

Now, a couple of these I can see that these are people who may have a lull in the action, so to speak, that you may be able to utilize them. But the COPE Unit, I would just echo the sentiments to be very careful in their use because those •• many of those individuals are out on the street, I know COPE officers from my precinct, the 7th Precinct, have extensive notes and logs on everything that's going on in the community. They very much have their finger on the pulse of those who are the troublemakers within the community and I would just caution the use of moving them away from those areas because they really have a tremendous deterrent effect on crime in the neighborhoods they patrol. So thank you for your answers.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Thank you, and I agree with you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Legislator O'Leary.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Commissioner, I heard your explanation to Legislator Carpenter regarding the utilization of COPE officers on patrol and I'm not quite certain that you answered that question directly. I have a question for you. What was the purpose of downing the cars during the winter months in the various precincts, the sector cars?

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yeah. There was a reason for that, we didn't need these personnel at that particular time, and it was money saved by putting the sectors down; not a lot of money, by the way. If I should mention, you know, when you talk about monies saved, when I got the bill, they estimated what it would cost to police the U.S. Open, for the eight days that we are out there it was \$1.4 million. We sat down again and I said, "Look, we've got to look at this and see if we can reduce this figure," I mean, that's a tremendous hit for eight days. And we think, we don't know what's going to happen but we think we can do it for half that now by utilizing people from different units rather than patrol. We're not taking people from patrol to do the U.S. Open, the precincts have to be properly covered while the U.S. Open is going on. It is going to be a hit on our budget. So the monies that were saved over the winter with the six weeks that we did it really wasn't a lot of money, it was a half a car here, a car there, it really wasn't a lot of money. It was a concept of allowing Precinct Commanders to properly manage the people that they had in an appropriate way without impacting public safety, and they did that. We all knew that that wasn't going to be a major savings, we weren't putting down a lot of cars where it would be •• it would take us through the summer, we never meant it that way.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Well, I recall statements made by you that that was the purpose of downing the cars, so you would have the resources available for the summer months when the officers were on vacation to fill those slots on ••

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yeah, whatever we saved ••

LEG. O'LEARY:

We would have to think it would be on overtime.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Whatever we saved during these months we're using now or has been used already.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Okay. Well, the Open ends June 20th, Sunday, June 20th, I think that's the date, but we're talking specifically about the hot summer months of July and August. And the perception given here today that the COPE units which are a very valuable commodity, if you will, to the communities throughout the County are going to be diminished somewhat. But by your own statement, you're stating that it's only going to be maybe one or two days a week that COPE officers are going to be used to fill the void in the sector cars which I agree have priority, the sector cars, the individuals who answer the calls for emergency and criminal reports and accidents, etcetera, should have a priority. But clearly, that's not the picture that you portrayed to us earlier on in the year when you said the reasoning behind downing all the cars on the midnight tours were for purposes of getting up a war chest, if you will, I think you called it a war chest, for purposes of the hot summer months, July and August, to hire those officers on overtime.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Well, we did save a little money, I did mention that, and we've utilized it, are utilizing it as we speak. We would be in a bigger hole if we hadn't done that, but it wasn't a major amount of money, I hope everybody understands that it wasn't millions of dollars, not by a long shot.

I should also mention again that we've done something else that's innovative for the months of June, July and August. Normally in the summer months, historically in the Police Department, officers were assigned to the range from Patrol Division, they would have to go qualify in the range one day; that meant they had to be backfilled. They also did training in the Police Academy which meant they had to be backfilled. They were on vacation, it's the heavy vacation, the three heavy vacation months of the year, so the overtime doubled in the summer, the expense to the budget doubled in the summer. We are going to do the range training and the academy training during the fall, winter and spring months rather than the summer, so we'll

have these officers on the street when we need them during the summer. And we can train them and get them qualified in the cooler months when things are not as hot on the streets; it was never done before, we're going to try it this year, we're already •• it's in action as we speak. You're going to see an impact, again, filling cars, precinct Lieutenants and Sergeants are not going to be going crazy during the summer trying to fill sector cars which is a major, major hit, by the way.

And also, I should mention to everybody here that when the overtime goes up in the summer, when people work a lot of overtime they get burned out, people forget this, that it's a hot time of the year doing extra time in patrol cars, it is not good to be doing that for the policing business. We want people that are fresh, that are rested. So that's also an aspect of this strategy of what we're doing and we think it's going to be good for the officers and for the people of Suffolk County.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Sir, aren't you somewhat limited in the personnel that you can deploy by existing contracts?

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Well, we're going to transfer people from the headquarters, our Support Services Division. We're actually going to transfer them on paper into the patrol for a week, ten days, whatever it takes, and that doesn't violate the contract.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Well, it violates the spirit of it, I mean, based on my past experience, but I'm not going to go there. Is COPE the same command number as the patrol in the precinct?

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

No.

LEG. O'LEARY:

It's a different command?

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yes.

LEG. O'LEARY:

I would •• are you contemplating transferring COPE personnel into the patrol command on a temporary basis?

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Well, we weren't contemplating that right now; there was a past practice where COPE officers were utilized for sector cars.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Yeah, I understand the concept of utilizing officers from another command into the patrol command, and certainly there were some contractual concerns with respect to that policy. But clearly there's language in the existing collective bargaining agreements that preclude you from doing just that without compensating the individuals accordingly.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Well, we can still call them COPE and have them answer 911; I mean, there's different ways of doing it.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Okay. I just •• all right.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

You know, and I don't want to get into the contract.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Exactly; neither do I, sir.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

You know, I don't think it's appropriate here.

LEG. O'LEARY:

And neither do I. I just want to point out ••

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

I think that ••

LEG. O'LEARY:

•• that COPE, I think the message you're hearing from the horseshoe today is that COPE is a very valuable •• I termed it a commodity within the County, and the Legislators are extremely reluctant to have those numbers decreased and redeployed in any way if it's going to impact the communities that they represent.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

No, no, I understand.

LEG. O'LEARY:

And I think you understand that.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

By the way, by the way, I was the Chief of Patrol when COPE was instituted, I want everybody to understand that. I started the bike patrols in this County, I'm very much aware of what they do and the history behind it. I'm also aware that patrol is the backbone of the Police Department and I don't give it lip service, I really mean that. Cops on the street are important. I'm not saying that people in headquarters don't have a job to do and that it's necessary to keep things functioning, but if some paperwork has to wait for a week so that we can serve the public on the streets, then we let it wait for a week; I have to make that decision. And I think that you'll see, if you wait till the end of summer you'll see that it worked out fine. The contractual issues, we have our Labor Relations Department that looks into that, I'm guided by what they say and we're aware of •• I understand exactly what you're saying, we're aware of the ramifications of that.

LEG. O'LEARY:

I suggest that you have your labor people look at the language in the various CBA's which have to do with the avoidance of the payment of overtime.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

I'm not trying to avoid overtime. If you remember ••

LEG. O'LEARY:

Sir, if you're transferring personnel to perform a function on a temporary basis to avoid paying compensation to those individuals who are currently performing that function, that might be

deemed to be for the purpose of avoiding the payment of overtime.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Yeah, it might be if that's what I said but I didn't say that.

And I want everybody to be very clear that these officers have to be retrained, they've been off the street a long time. Just to give you an example, people in the Police Academy that teach recruits, either in service or new recruits, a lot of credibility is attached to being on the street and knowing what it's like on the street rather than being off the street for ten years, and I think you could agree with me on that.

LEG. O'LEARY:

And I do, I just •• I hope you can understand my position, not only with respect to the current deployment of personnel in the COPE units but the function of patrol as well; both are very, very important.

And I agree with your statement that the patrol is the backbone of the department. However, I caution you as to your deployment tactics with respect to filling up the patrol ranks at the sacrifice of the COPE ranks.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Well, I'll certainly take that under advisement, and if you have any suggestion on how I can do it, I'm open to that. So if you could help me I'd appreciate it, to get more people into patrol to police Suffolk County during the hot months of the summer.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Legislator Losquadro.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Yes. I was trying to get to a point earlier and unfortunately you sort of went off on a little bit different tangent on the direction you were trying to head with the department. But one of the points I was trying to make, I just heard you make mention of the fact if the paperwork has to wait a week it has to wait a week; well, having worked in the insurance business for almost a decade, I can tell you that there are many businesses out there and many people out there who are dependent on a lot of these clerical functions being performed in a timely fashion. And I know it sounds well and good to just say, "If it has to sit it has to sit," but there are many

people out there who are dependent on these being performed in a timely fashion.

Now, if you're saying you've identified many of these clerical functions that can be handled through civilianization, well then I say go forward with that. But in the interim, please do not let any of these functions languish because you're trying to redeploy folks to not cut into the overtime budget because the many facets of the Police Department touch on many different businesses, many different people's lives. So I would just caution you against taking that very cavalier attitude towards if something has to sit it has to sit, people are waiting for any number of things, it could even just be someone •• I'm sure you are very well aware of the length of Suffolk County's pistol licensing process and people are •• many of the sportsmen out there who wish to engage in that activity are frustrated already with the length of the process. So again, it's very easy to just say let these things sit if they must, but I would just caution you against taking that approach too strongly because there are many people's lives that that approach will effect. So again, I know you're taking all of this under advisement, so I'd appreciate it if you would just make that note also. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

But I think I should clarify something here. If you think I'm taking anything cavalier about this whole thing, I just want to correct you, okay? I take this stuff very seriously and I think if I have to make a decision between paperwork waiting a week or two and somebody answering a call to communications for an emergency, it's an easy call for me.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

All right, Commissioner, I thank you very much for coming down today. As you can see, this is an issue that is very sensitive to the Legislators because this is something that the community really, you know, is very much •• has embraced and they love their COPE officers as they should. So I thank you. There are no other questions for the Commissioner? Thank you very much, I appreciate it.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

Thank you very much.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

If I may.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Legislator Losquadro?

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Commissioner, I know we've been going back and forth on this issue, but on the record I just want to thank you publicly for the 702 car for the 7th Precinct. It was great to have you down there and it was great to have that vehicle on 24 hour patrol, it's a great help for the coverage on the north shore of the 7th Precinct. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER DORMER:

You're welcome. You know, we don't cut everything, we add where we think it's necessary. And I appreciate that, by the way; we're even now. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you. As everyone is aware, this is the season of DARE graduations and since this is the Public Safety Committee, I know one of the Legislators would like to attend a DARE graduation in the district.

So what I'm going to do, we have a number of cards but they're all for the issue of EMS which is going to be the next scheduled topic. So what we're going to do, since the agenda is very, very short, we're going to go to the agenda and then we will go to the next topic which is the EMS response time. Actually, the resolution for that is not able to be acted on today anyway because there is going to be a public hearing at the Legislature on Tuesday. So until that hearing is closed we can't act on the resolution anyway.

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TABLED RESOLUTIONS

All right, so we'll go to **1418•04 • Amending the 2004 Capital Budget and Program to establish affordable County Jail Cost Containment Policy (replacement of Jail facility at Yaphank) (CP 3008) (County Executive)**. This resolution is basically moot, but ••

LEG. CRECCA:

Motion to table subject to call.

LEG. BISHOP:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

There's a motion to table subject to call, second by Legislator Bishop. All those in favor? Opposed? ***The resolution is tabled subject to call (VOTE: 7•0•0•0).***

1508•04 • Adopting Local Law No. 2004, a Local Law licensing businesses which service portable fire extinguishers and automatic fire extinguishing systems (Bishop).

LEG. BISHOP:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

I know that there were changes on this resolution. There were a number of concerns raised about the Consumer Affairs Division doing this, they felt it was too technical; and I would just ask the sponsor of the resolution, that has all been changed?

LEG. BISHOP:

Yeah. Strange public hearing we had at the last meeting of the Legislature; everybody who spoke was in favor of the resolution, however, the two departments which would be charged with carrying it out who also support it both said, "We don't want to do it in its entirety." FRES said that they would do the inspections which is really the lion's share of the work ••

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Uh•huh.

LEG. BISHOP:

•• but they didn't want to do the licensing, processing and the paper work. Consumer Affairs similarly said, "It's a great idea, it should be done but we don't want to do the licensing and paperwork." I had to make a decision, Legislatively I chose to keep it all within FRES, I thought that would make more sense.

I would •• if this concerns any Legislators, what I would say is we could pass it out today and if the County Executive can get his departments together and work it out and figure out a better

way than just having it in FRES, I'm open to that and we can do it by CN if it needs to be. But since nobody opposes the bill, I think we should approve it.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay, so you want to make a motion to approve.

LEG. BISHOP:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

And do we have a second?

LEG. LINDSAY:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Second by Legislator Lindsay. On 1508, all those in favor? Opposed?

The resolution is approved (VOTE: 7•0•0•0).

We have a Procedural Motion that was tabled; is there a motion?

LEG. BISHOP:

Motion to approve.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Didn't you withdraw this?

LEG. BISHOP:

No, I didn't withdraw it, you voted it down.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Procedural Motion No. 1•2004 • To retain consultant for the purpose of reviewing and evaluating alternatives to incarceration to reduce our daily jail bed population (Bishop).

LEG. BISHOP:

You tabled it last time.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Legislator Bishop makes a motion. Is there a second?

LEG. LINDSAY:

I'll second it.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Seconded by Legislator Lindsay.

LEG. NOWICK:

Question.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Yes, Legislator Nowick.

LEG. NOWICK:

Just a question of the sponsor. I thought I remember you saying the last time we were here that one of the college students that you hired found ••

LEG. BISHOP:

Right.

LEG. NOWICK:

•• a way of researching this?

LEG. BISHOP:

Yeah, the CJCC, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, has contacted the U.S. Department of Justice and they will be sending somebody to help coordinate with the CJCC policies and data collection. But I maintain that we still need an independent assessment of the viability of alternatives to incarceration.

The report, the Pulitzer Bogard Report which lacked this, even though they were charged to do

this, they said they couldn't do this because the data was insufficient and they were pressed to move forward with insufficient data so it was left out of the report. But they said that it would be wise for the County to have this aspect of the study and I feel that we should invest the money from our 456 Account; after all, the potential is to save tens of millions of dollars if we find a way to reduce our jail daily population.

LEG. NOWICK:

And the cost, was it 30,000 for this?

LEG. BISHOP:

Yeah, right.

LEG. NOWICK:

Right. So the study from the younger people that you were talking about ••

LEG. BISHOP:

No, they're •• what they found was this U.S. Department of Justice Program which they'll come to Suffolk County and work with us, but I still think we need this study as well.

LEG. O'LEARY:

Madam Chair?

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Legislator O'Leary.

LEG. O'LEARY:

I haven't changed my position on this particular proposal. I believe we have the resources and the wherewithal right within the County to do just this. In my mind, it would be redundant. We have a body in Suffolk County that you made mention of that meets infrequently at best, but I think that there's an attempt on their part to meet more frequently for purposes of exploring just what this outside agency, if you will, would come into Suffolk County for purposes of telling us what alternatives we have to incarceration when we have a group right •• that's been put together right in the County that does just that. So again, I'm opposed to this particular proposal, I think it's redundant and unnecessary.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay. We have a motion and a second to approve. All those in favor? Opposed?

LEG. CRECCA:

Opposed.

LEG. O'LEARY:

I'm opposed.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Opposed.

LEG. NOWICK:

Opposed.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Opposed, ***the resolution fails (VOTE: 2•5•0•0 In Favor: Legislators Bishop & Lindsay).***

LEG. BISHOP:

Was it unanimous on that side?

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Yes.

LEG. CRECCA:

Only on this side it was unanimous.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Yes.

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INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1568•04 • Adopting Local Law No. 2004, a Local Law to ban the purchase, sale and use of mobile infrared transmitters (MIRT's) in Suffolk County

(Cooper). That has to be tabled pending a public hearing. I don't know if •• I know the County Attorney requested to speak on that, you may want to wait and do it at the public hearing.

Then we have **1582•04 • Streamline Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Coordination and improve response time (Bishop).**

LEG. BISHOP:

Motion to table.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

The County Attorney wanted to speak on that resolution also.

MS. BIZZARRO:

That's fine.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay. All right, so both of those are tabled. I'll make the motion to table, second by Legislator O'Leary on both 68 and 82. All in favor? Opposed? **1568 and 1582 • Tabled (VOTE: 7•0•0•0•0).**

1615•04 • Accepting and appropriating 100% additional State aid from the 1% bail fee account for the Combatting Graffiti Vandalism Program administered by the Department of probation and authorizing the County Executive to execute related agreements (Presiding Officer at the Request of the County Executive). Motion to approve and put on the consent calendar, 100% State aid for combating graffiti vandalism. Second by Legislator Nowick. All those in favor? Opposed?
The resolution is approved (VOTE: 7•0•0•0•0).

1616•04 • Creating a position and transferring funds within the Department of Probation to reduce jail overcrowding through enhancements to the Electronic Monitoring Program (Presiding Officer At the Request of the County Executive).

LEG. O'LEARY:

Explanation on that, please.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

This is a County Executive's resolution. Is someone here from the County Executive's Office to explain this? Great, John Desmond is here from the Department of Probation; John, if you would.

DIRECTOR DESMOND:

Good afternoon. I will try to make this very quick. This is the proposal to replace the electronic monitoring equipment that we now have with some additional units and a Probation Officer while we undergo experiments with the active Global Positioning System.

What we're trying to do is skip a generation, in the '05 budget we're proposing to buy 10 GPS active units that will see if the software and everything is working out properly and we can adopt them for wide scale use. Until that time, we're looking to replace our existing units, which are wearing out, with these units which are the same format; it's basically a transition holding until we see how the new format works.

The advantage to the active GPS is that we'll be able to track offenders real time, know where their location is at all times and we'll get a signal any time that they go someplace where they're not supposed to be; for instance, if we have a sex offender and he's barred from being anywhere near schools, it would trigger immediate notification. We're very interested in this new technology and we'll be getting back to you by the end of '05 with how that's doing.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

John, I see in the title of the resolution that the purpose of this is to reduce jail overcrowding; how many inmates do you think are going to be reduced by this?

DIRECTOR DESMOND:

I'm hoping that we're going to be able to reduce the inmate flow by 10 to 20.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Ten to 20% or 10 to 20 individuals?

DIRECTOR DESMOND:

No, 10 to 20; if I could do that ••

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay. I just wanted to make sure that that was clear.

DIRECTOR DESMOND:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Ten to 20.

DIRECTOR DESMOND:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

So •• I mean, I appreciate the poetic license with the titles on some of these resolutions, but I don't think 10 to 20 is really going to have a substantial effect in jail overcrowding, albeit a very good attempt to secure approval.

LEG. CRECCA:

The bill is good, the title is bad.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

I would ask Budget Review if they could explain where this offset is coming from, and if it is an offset that is problematic to be used or not.

MS. DOERING:

If you give me just one second. The transfer is coming from the rental of business machines and systems. There is a surplus in funds in the amount of \$53,090 in that appropriation due to a reduced cost for the lease of existing equipment, and that money then is transferred to other areas of the same appropriation for salaries and equipment and benefits to accomplish this.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay. Are there any questions on this? Okay, we have a motion by Legislator O'Leary, second by Legislator Bishop. All those in favor? Opposed? ***The resolution is approved (VOTE: 7•0 •0•0).***

LEG. BISHOP:

Please add me as a cosponsor, please.

DIRECTOR DESMOND:

Thank you.

LEG. CRECCA:

Anything to let those prisoners out.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

1639•04 • Authorizing the County Executive to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal Bureau of Investigation regarding access and use of the Suffolk County Firearms Range and Ammunition Bunker located in Westhampton, New York (Presiding Officer at the Request of the County Executive).

LEG. O'LEARY:

Motion.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

I had gotten a request from the County Attorney's Office again; Basia Braddish, did you want to come forward on this?

MS. DEREN•BRADDISH:

Only if you have questions.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Oh, okay; thank you. We have a motion and a second to approve.

All those in favor? Again, I will just put on the record that the range is a County range and that County departments, the Sheriff's Department, Probation, whomever, would have first access.

And all those in favor? Opposed? ***The resolution is approved (VOTE: 7•0•0•0).***

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SENSE RESOLUTIONS

Sense 57•2004 • Memorializing Sense Resolution requesting State and Federal officials to enforce existing laws to recover lost tax revenue (Caracciolo).

LEG. LINDSAY:

He finds a million ways to word this. Motion to table.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

We have a motion to table. Is there a second?

LEG. BISHOP:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

There's a motion and a second to table. All those in favor? Opposed?

LEG. NOWICK:

Opposed.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

We have one opposed, ***the resolution is tabled (VOTE: 6•1•0•0 Opposed: Legislator Nowick).***

Okay, we will now go to the presentation. I know that there are a number of cards but I think it probably would be more effective to have the presentation first, this way if you have any questions or comments you would like to alter you'll have the opportunity to hear what's been said. So I would ask Dr. Alicandro and Dr. Mark Henry, New York State EMS Director •• I believe that's the correct title •• to please come forward.

LEG. CRECCA:

Madam Chairwoman, as you know, I'm leaving to go to DARE, I appreciate you doing the

agenda early. But I just wanted to indicate on the record that it's not for lack of an interest in this topic, I'm very interested in this and I'm a cosponsor of Legislator Bishop's current bill, so just to indicate my •• I believe it's a very important issue, but I think it's important for me to attend the DARE also.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you. We'll just wait while the stenographer changes the tape.

Just in the case there's any misunderstanding I'll state it again; I do have the cards that everyone has filled out and everyone is going to be called up to speak, but I thought that you would prefer to have the presentation by Dr. Alicandro and Dr. Henry prior to your comments rather than after. Go ahead.

DR. ALICANDRO:

Thank you very much. I don't have a formal presentation, we gave a presentation here in November of 2003 to this committee, but I did want to just give a little bit of background of what led to the protocol being developed by the Regional Emergency Medical Advisory Committee and the Regional EMS Council.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

And also, too, you can make reference to the resolution that Legislator Bishop has sponsored which was tabled but will be addressed again, and basically that was why you were invited back today.

DR. ALICANDRO:

Okay, thank you. The issue became apparent in actually 2000 when I received anecdotal reports of response delays referred by the public and emergency medical technicians as well as first responders and set about subsequent to that to look at existing dispatch data and prehospital care report data which indicated that there was a subset of patients who waited more than 20 minutes for ambulance response. And there was also a subset for which the ambulance was unable to respond, and in those cases requiring mutual aid tended to have the most lengthy response times.

This data was presented to the Regional Emergency Medical Services Council in March of 2001, at which time an Ad Hoc Response Committee was formed and continued to work on refining a

look at existing data. This was then presented to the entire Regional Council in March of 2002 and recommendations were set forward by the Response Committee to the Regional EMS Council, both of which were approved in March of 2002. And what the Regional Council did was establish a goal for the region which actually is the same as a goal that was put forward in 1987 by a Suffolk County Appointed EMS task force and that is to have an ambulance on scene in nine minutes from dispatch for 90% of the time, most of the time.

The other part of the recommendations dealt with those calls for whom the initial agency was unable to respond, and that can happen for a number of reasons including the ambulance being out on another call or there are multiple calls simultaneously, that's bound to happen because of the nature of the business. And in those cases, a series of recommendations were made which is what the existing protocol is to address that subset of patients, and what the protocol actually states is the following; that a valid data priority dispatch system should be used by dispatch agencies and in-house dispatchers because there are scripted algorithms and prearrival instructions that have a greater interoperator reliability than an ad-libbed system so that it's more predictable on when you're going to need advanced life support and things of that nature. And I actually have a letter from the State that went to Bureau of Criminal Justice recommending that this be used in dispatch agencies that I can distribute. It also indicates that if when using this system you identify that an advanced life support provider is likely to be needed, that that should be accessed at the dispatch level rather than when someone gets to the scene because that causes delay in that appropriate care.

The major thing it says is that a crew confirmation should be in place to know whether a provider is going to be able to handle a call or whether they're intending to respond to the call. And this crew confirmation, I think there's been a little bit of confusion, does not need to be a call-in, if there's in-house crews there can be one call made to dispatch saying, "I have an in-house crew today and we're prepared to handle calls that come in." There are many different mechanisms for ensuring that there is a crew available. So this is an early notification to dispatch, there is someone intending to respond to the call.

If after four minutes no one has declared their intent to respond to a call in most cases, then mutual aid should be accessed from a neighboring agency to help with trying to field this call. In a critical call, those are the higher priority calls, if no one has declared their intent to respond to the call, then a neighbor should be asked for help in a more expeditious fashion and we're

recommending two minutes for that. Because typically what the providers have told me is that if they're available and they hear a call for a critical patient like that, they know pretty much right away whether they're going to be able to go or not and can let dispatch know.

And the final part of the protocol indicates that if a technician, emergency medical technician gets to the scene and identifies that the patient is not suffering from a time•dependent entity and can wait a few minutes for ambulance response, they can relay that information to dispatch and delay the time to mutual aid, as long as that's okayed by their agency.

That's what the protocol, in essence, said, you should know if somebody is coming in a timely fashion intending to handle the call who may not be in•house, may be coming from home. And it doesn't say that they have to be on the road in that amount of time but just declaring their intent to respond, and that if that's not the case, if no one is available, then mutual aid should be solicited.

The other part of work that REMSCO has been doing, along with Regional Emergency Medical Advisory Committee, is trying to refine data collection which has been found to be a bit problematic in identifying exactly what's going on with the system because in order to address the system and assess it and see what's working best, whether the best practice is what works well, you need to really have accurate data so that you can focus in on any of those agencies that are doing well and then can disseminate that information. So there has been an effort to try to refine data collection and get data shared between the different public safety answering points and the agencies themselves, because the pre•hospital care report that's filled out by the agency addresses only their response, not what's gone before. So if the call has been mutual aided, the overall response time of that call is lost and those are the ones that tend to be the most problematic so those are the ones we're concentrating on trying to identify.

And that's essentially what the protocol says, what the history is, of what's been done. I don't know if there are specific questions or if, Mark, you want to say anything.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Dr. Henry, did you want to add anything?

DR. HENRY:

My role of the State is the Medical Director for the State EMS Program in the Department of

Health. I just want to say that the Director of the State EMS Program wrote a letter to Dr. Alicandro. And when it came to his attention that the Regional EMS Council voted to adopt and implement this policy, he wrote congratulations to Dr. Alicandro and the Regional EMS Council for developing it and promoting its implementation. And I think this paragraph is important; "The State EMS Council, of which we're part, and the State EMS Medical Advisory Committee, of which Suffolk County is part, had previously supported that the Regional Councils and the Regional Emergency Medical Advisory Committee has worked locally to improve response times. The Department of Health has supported such efforts and encourages the Council to continue to do so here. It's the intent of the Article 30 legislation that the Regional EMS Councils provide local leadership necessary to improve both educational and operational aspects of the local EMS system."

So I believe that what's happened in Suffolk County, the work of the Council and the work of Medical Advisory Committee, is doing what they're supposed to do by State law and State intent. They're looking at the quality and needs for County citizens and residents and they're taking action to fix needs for coordination and management of resources and sharing.

I think this proposal is very logical and long overdue. I have a roll as a Professor and Chair at Stony Brook University for Emergency Medicine. I've been conducting, with the cooperation of EMS agencies and the hospitals, studies in quality improvement for a long time here, they've led to lots of changes and they've been very good for the County. But what's been lacking is the time someone actually called for help and then the ambulance responds. So it's very frustrating going through all the effort of collecting prehospital data and hospital data and not having the actual call when the need arrives and a resident said, "I need you now," not knowing that time. You can't make sense of the data, so this will help towards that end.

I just want to add a little bit more, that as Dr. Alicandro said, the State EMS Medical Advisory Committee has discussed this, you know, for some time and has voted on this and so has the State Council and they've advocated features and for emergency medical dispatch and the roll of the Regional Medical Advisory Committees in that. And they say, you know, there are national standards for this, this is not new, there's national standards and courses that many people here in the County have probably taken. And I hope that by a copy of this you're able to look at it and think about including it in your resolutions. Some of the components that are very important are that the EMS Dispatch System should work cooperatively and coordinate

their EMS activities with the Regional Emergency Medical Advisory Committee responsible for oversight and prehospital care in the region. And some of the components critical are that the emergency medical dispatchers are trained in the principals and procedures of EMD, the following standards of a recognized curriculum, they use a nationally recognized priority reference system and they have written policies and procedures for call receipt, call processing and dispatch of resources based on the identified patient need, and these must include the time frames for call processing, the priority assignment of resources based on need and availability, simultaneous dispatch of resources, ALS intercept, mutual aid, multiple casualties incidents, etcetera. They have to have an identified physician medical director who's an active participant in the regional EMS system and is familiar with EMD dispatch principals the local EMS system and is responsible for the development of the medical component and quality improvement of the EMD policies and procedures and is responsible for collaboration with REMAC in developing the EMD system. And the policies to maintain documentation including voice and text records compliant with State requirements and the local requirements and that they participate in agency, County and regional keywide. And I think this resolution is going to move towards that end, I hope by in corporation of some of these other features you can fulfill recommendations that have been long discussed at the State level and Suffolk County continues to move forward.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay, thank you very much for your presentation. Are there any questions?

LEG. BISHOP:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Legislator Bishop.

LEG. BISHOP:

Thank you. A brief preamble in which I just want to note that over the last several weeks I have emersed myself in this area of government and I can assure everybody who is interested that the volunteer professionals and the paid professionals who are in this system care deeply and they dedicate their lives to saving lives, and I think that's what creates a lot of the passion that we're seeing on the issue. Overall, I believe that there are solutions out there and there's an awful lot of intelligence also and a lot of passion and if we continue to work together, we can develop a better system.

Dr. Alicandro, Dr. Henry, I have a couple of questions in anticipation of the criticisms that you're going to hear and probably have heard before. The first is can you comment briefly, because there's a lot of people that need to speak today, on the notion that there really isn't a problem in Suffolk County. That Suffolk County is a huge County with a large population, one of the largest in the country, volume of calls over a hundred thousand, that the calls that are not responded to within 15 minutes are a small portion of what we deal with and it's just a tolerable inefficiency.

DR. HENRY:

Well, I'll make a couple of comments from the ER. I've had patients who have brought in children who were choking on a coin and they said, "I called for an ambulance and I was there 20 minutes," and she said, "I felt very stupid, what if I needed it?" The kid obviously choked it up and swallowed it in the esophagus and hadn't choked to death, the child was alive, but the person who called, not knowing the exact time, was flabbergasted waiting there.

I remember a case where a fireman's family member had an arrest and they were doing CPR in the bedroom and they called and the local, for whatever reason, couldn't get out, maybe they were out on another call, and they could look out their window and see across the border to another town that they knew was nearby and there was a long delay. So these are not just unique in Suffolk, they happen in the rest of the State and they make you want to tear your hair out, it's like why is this? And that's a matter of coordination. You know, in a system, it's not like the EMT or the ER doctor or the trauma surgeon saves a life, everyone works together to save a life, I mean, it's bigger than one individual person.

Now, I think these are probably small in number, but they're not zero. And if they are small in number, this type of system will affirm that there's no problem; and if there is a problem it will point to areas where there's some need for more resources or help or better coordination or management. So I think it should be on the table, I think people have a right to know and I think, you know, knowledge is power.

DR. ALICANDRO:

I just want to echo that the volunteers do do a great job and when they can go they go to any kind of call that they receive, we found that with the data across the board the response is the

same if someone's available. The problem is if someone is not available to go, in the cases and anecdotes we've looked at such as Dr. Henry was putting forward, the delays occurred because of a lack of timely request for mutual aid; there were lengthy delays in between each request for mutual aid and that's what made us look at this issue.

What we can identify from the County dispatch data is that there are over 4,000 calls in which the initial agency is unable to respond for the past few years each year and we identified a subset of about a little over 2,000 calls that waited longer than 20 minutes, and this was across all categories. So one case is significant and it makes you want to look and see how we can look at the system because we have this responsibility to the public when they let us know about this to look and see how we can keep this from happening.

LEG. BISHOP:

But the notion, Dr. Alicandro, is that hey, in New York City you would find the same percentage in slow response or in Nassau County; I mean; is that true, is Suffolk unique?

DR. ALICANDRO:

I think in the cases of non•response, what's unique is that there is not a guaranteed backup where if an agency •• in some cases there is because some agencies do have, you know, mutual aid worked out such that it's very rapid or they have simultaneous dispatch, so several agencies have done that. But I think what's not guaranteed in a lot of cases is that the next agency that you access has an available crew known to be able to respond to that call and that's what leads to the lengthy delays. I think that's what's unique.

DR. HENRY:

I want to ••

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay. I really would like to •• excuse me for interrupting. Unless you've got something, you know, dramatically new to add, I really want to get to the cards and I think we owe it to the people that came here to speak.

DR. HENRY:

Give me 30 seconds.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Sure, go ahead.

DR. HENRY:

I want to say that, you know, some of the squads and agencies in Suffolk County are exemplary, they've won the State awards and they are models and we've had, you know, the models of excellence right here. And this to me is an assurance throughout the area that it's systematic, that there are pockets where there's problems, and people in local communities will say that, too, and I want to be on the record as saying that.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay, thank you. And I thank you both for coming down and I would ask, if it's at all possible, that you stay and listen to the rest of the speakers so that you can hear from those in the field that are going to be facing this on a day to day basis.

DR. HENRY:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

The first speaker, Ronald Hense.

CHIEF HENSE:

Good afternoon. Thank you. My name is Ronald Hense, I'm Ex•Chief of the Flanders/Northampton Volunteer Ambulance, I'm past Chair of the Southampton Town Medical Advisory Association. I'm presently Chief of Flanders Fire Department and I'm speaking today in reference to the emergency medical response times.

The east end, Southampton Medical Advisory Association, Southampton Town Board and the EMS providers in the Town of Southampton are not opposed to improving response times; all of us are willing to make positive changes within the town and within the County. EMS agencies within the town already work close with each other, when Hampton Bays can't get a crew or partial crew EMT, they'll call a neighboring department for a driver or an ambulance; it's done in a timely fashion, we have one dispatch, we all monitor each other's calls. Likewise if Flanders has trouble getting out, we'll call Riverhead for an EMT or a driver or an ambulance or they'll call us, we work very closely, I can't stress that enough.

For County Legislator Bishop, the Regional Medical Council, to come up with laws and mandates that aren't funded and threaten to take away our insurance, it shouldn't be done that way. They should come out, REMSCo and EMS should come out to the individual agencies, come out and help us with our shortfalls, identify them, bring good ideas from other agencies to work with us. They have never come out to Flanders Northhampton Ambulance to say, "Okay, how do you guys operate? Let's pool your ideas together, run with you for a while, okay."

Southampton Town is always looking for improvements and we would like to build our own system to work with our own PSAP's and to work with our own agencies to benefit the EMS provider and our patients, because that's our goal out there, to provide assistance to the patients in a timely fashion.

I talked to representation from REMSCO and Dr. Alicandro in the hall and they're already talking about softening up some of the language in the Exhibit A REMSCO proposal, protocol. Part F, it says that, "The emergency medical technician on scene may extend or expedite the time for request of mutual aid;" they've already stated that they want to change that for the first arriving emergency medical technician, that instead of having it on nine minutes that they can change that time of a response time. So we need to look at this and give this some time and reevaluate some of this. Like I said, Southampton Town, the east end is not like the west end towns, what's going to work for Montauk is not going to work for Huntington; what's going to work for Babylon is not going to work for Orient. So we can't take a cookie cutter approach to this, we need to look at the east end and the west end because they are significantly different. We'd like to pose to REMSCO our own system that works with our PSAP's, have them sign off on it and put it into place.

In closing, if anybody does think that there's a problem in the EMS community or the fire community, I invite you to come down to your local EMS agencies or fire agencies, fill out an application and help us to help our communities, because that's what we need, we need volunteers, we need people like you in the audience to come out and help us because that's what it's all about, the volunteers.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you, Ronald. Thank you very much.

LEG. BISHOP:

Chief? Chief? Madam Chair, I sat through an hour•and•a•half of the Police Commissioner.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Actually, we've been here about 50 minutes, but go right ahead.

LEG. BISHOP:

No, we've been here ••

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

We started about twenty after one, but go ahead.

LEG. BISHOP:

Just go. Chief, what you said is excellent, I agree. What needs to happen is that departments need to pool resources and they need to come up with proposals that they can submit that will improve the system. And that's why I tabled the bill today, I intend to table the bill through the autumn to allow the departments to have that time to do that. So I appreciate that and I will •
• if you'd like, I'd come out to Flanders as I did with North Babylon and observe there.

CHIEF HENSE:

Okay.

LEG. BISHOP:

But most important is that •• my hope was that this bill would have the effect that it's having which is I would like the volunteer community themselves to tell us what they need to make the system better.

CHIEF HENSE:

Okay, that's not the way it came across to the volunteers on the streets. We read the article in Newsday and then things started coming across saying that this was going to be law, this is how you're going to have to do business, we said hold on a minute. If you can just hold off and get some ideas or some input from the volunteers and the agencies that are out there doing the job, I think that would be fantastic and we can come up with a solution.

LEG. BISHOP:

Right.

CHIEF HENSE:

And if anybody says that there's not a problem, they're sticking their head in the dirt and ignoring it and it's just going to get worse.

LEG. BISHOP:

I agree. Great, thank you. Thank you for coming down.

CHIEF HENSE:

Anybody else have any questions?

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

That's it, thank you for coming down. Linda Kabot.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

Honorable Angie Carpenter, Chair of the Public Safety Committee and all the members that are here, I'm Linda Kabot, I'm a Councilwoman in the Town of Southampton and I thank you for this opportunity to speak. Sandy Sullivan, your Chief Deputy Clerk, is handing out a letter, I will be reading some excerpts from that letter, I have modified it slightly based on the testimony that I've heard today.

On behalf of the Town of Southampton, I urge you to not act in haste on this proposal and to please take seriously our opposition to the proposed EMS response time mandates and dispatching protocol that is under your consideration. I've spoken with other officials on the east end and they have asked me to share our mutual concerns. The Town of Southampton Fire Chiefs Council, the Southampton Town EMS Advisory Association, Peconic Chiefs Council, the Suffolk County E•911 Commission have all indicated their opposition to the proposed legislation as currently worded.

I would like to emphasize that the Town of Southampton and its agencies involved in emergency services are not against prompt response time. We understand that time saves lives and that the outcome of medical emergencies depends largely on the timely and appropriate intervention. The Town of Southampton supports efforts to improve response time by the volunteer agencies that service the emergency medical needs of our community.

Members of the Suffolk County Legislature, however, need to understand and respect that there are differences between the communities in western Suffolk and eastern Suffolk; a one size fits all approach does not work for certain emergency services.

Our primary concerns are as follows; a County wide, cookie•cutter approach does not address geographical considerations, population density differences and rural areas more similar to Upstate, New York than western Suffolk or Nassau County. There are substantial property tax impacts from this legislation which amounts to what we call an unfunded mandate for public safety answering points, PSAPs, and ambulance special assessment districts, special improvement districts. We believe that Suffolk County is acting outside of its authority in connection with dispatching services as the majority of ambulance/EMS on the east end are not dispatched by the County. For example, REMSCO and REMAC are not recognized by the Town of Southampton Police Department PSAP as having any authority over dispatching protocol. We believe Suffolk County ought not mandate priority EMD dispatch as many agencies on the east end prefer plain language dispatch, not Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and all this lingo. There are potential requirements that might impede service operations that exist today with regard to the priority EMD dispatch protocol; some of that does not address geographical differences, traffic considerations and scene conditions.

The proposed mandate is a detriment to volunteerism; ultimately, this legislation may force agencies to go paid on the east end. We believe that the interest promoting this legislation may be more representative of entities with paid personnel such as paid EMT's and hospital personnel and individuals that may be looking for greater venues, job venues for trained paramedics. There are significant liability issues with placing a Countywide nine minute response time mandate within the legislation. Guidelines are fine, but once a mandate is codified, the lawsuits will surely site noncompliance with the REMSCO protocol and response time that is referenced in the County Law if it is adopted. We believe that REMSCO and REMAC have failed to represent the interest of the east end in adopting this protocol. We believe REMSCO and REMAC exceeded their authority as defined by State law in recommending a Countywide mandate for dispatching protocol through coordination and response time standards. It's our position that the Suffolk County Legislature should exclude the east end towns from this legislation pending further study ••

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Councilwoman, if you could please sum up, because we do have the written copy here.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

Sure; I have two more paragraphs. Thank you. Okay •• and an in•depth review of the statistics on the east end. Alternatively consider excluding any agencies that are not dispatched by Suffolk County, okay, for example, the Town of Southampton which has it's own PSAP.

We thank you for tabling this matter and we do plan on attending the hearing on, I believe it's June 22nd in Riverhead of the full Legislature. We would like to confirm that it is in Riverhead, the County seat, and that there could be greater representation of EMS agencies. There are just but a few representatives with me here from the east, and if they would stand up for just a moment; each of these individuals are dedicated officers and volunteers from the ambulance districts that have taken time out of their busy schedules to come here to Hauppauge. This is not an easy journey due to the US Open and all of the public safety needs that are associated with this monumental enterprise and its considerable traffic demands and security considerations for the Town of Southampton. And as testified earlier by your own Police Commissioner, many of those volunteers in our community are actually committed volunteer resources to this enterprise. But I assure you that the issue that you are discussing today with regard to this proposal is of critical concern to all of these individuals and the resident taxpayers of the east end towns and villages.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

Please do not act in haste. We thank you and please make an informed decision. Thank you for listening.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you very much. I believe Legislator Bishop has a question.

LEG. BISHOP:

Councilwoman, what is the Town of Southampton's obligation in the system?

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

The Town of Southampton is the Board of Fire •• excuse me, of Ambulance Commissioners for a number of the ambulance services in the town, they're operated as special improvement districts, so the agencies are under a contract with the Town of Southampton. There are two agencies in the town that are operated through their fire districts and the elected Board of Fire Commissioners is responsible for the ambulance.

LEG. BISHOP:

So does the Town Board monitor the response times if you're rejecting that REMSCO has the authority to do it; who's monitoring the response times? Do you have the data that you can share with REMSCO or myself?

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

I do not have the data, but the individual agencies certainly has data. I don't believe REMSCO necessarily has all of the data. Recently we all read in Newsday a lot of data that was released which was not necessarily accurate. So as ex•Chief Hense had indicated, it would be helpful if REMSCO would come out and yourself to actually meet with east end agencies, see how things are done and review some of this data.

LEG. BISHOP:

Well, why don't you bring out the data to my office. The New York Times apparently had the data also, it was on the front page of the Times. I'm just concerned that one of the aspect of the bill is that we should have uniform data collection and I would hope that the Town of Southampton would support that; is that something you would support?

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

Well, I heard system testimony earlier today, I believe it was Dr. Henry who indicated one of the goals was to refine data collection, that that was one of your goals in putting forward this legislation, and do the information sharing. I don't believe that there's anybody saying we should not do information sharing.

LEG. BISHOP:

Right.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

The idea here is the way the legislation has come about and the wording, we're not opposed to response time improvement, we're opposed to the way it's worded; "a threat of removal of your liability insurance."

LEG. BISHOP:

Right.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

A threat that if you are non-compliant with the County mandate County wide, you will lose your certification from the State of New York.

LEG. BISHOP:

The liability insurance, what is your understanding of how that came about?

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

The insurance?

LEG. BISHOP:

Yeah.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

Just reading what your Aide Glenn provided to me.

LEG. BISHOP:

Okay. No, I mean, there's no obligation that the County provided, as you know.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

Okay.

LEG. BISHOP:

I was hoping you would know that. So when the County chooses to provide it, it may put conditions on the provision of it.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

So you want to set standards with regard to whether or not you would provide ••

LEG. BISHOP:

What I actually want is what the other Chief who had a very different tone stated which is what I want is I want all departments that have a problem, and I would think that's almost everybody, to address it and to work with the County and with REMSCO on solving it. And if that's the Town of Southampton's position, then we're not going to have any argument we'll work together.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

No, no, I feel that we should have a cooperative tone. And I do apologize if you're taking the tone adversely, I did come with prepared remarks and I did hear testimony and I do appreciate you responding to former Chief Hense that you would be willing to come out and actually work with the east end agencies that have indicated concern, particularly because we have a large service area for a number of our agencies and it's just more rural.

LEG. BISHOP:

Okay. So I'll meet you out there.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

Great.

LEG. BISHOP:

But you're also going to come out west with your data. Thanks.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you very much.

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

Okay. I just gave to ••

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

I just want to add to the rest of the speakers, we are •• we do have a timer, we've got another committee meeting starting so we are going to keep to the three minutes. Ed Seltenreich? I'm sorry, I should have had the glasses on, it would have been easier because the penmanship was very clear.

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

Thank you very much. My name is Ed Seltenreich, I'm the Chief of the East Quogue Fire Department. We're kind of unique on the east end, we run fire and rescue in the Hamlet of East Quogue. I'm Co-Chairman of Southampton Town EMS, I'm an EMT for 15 years, I've been a 22 year fireman, volunteer fireman.

I applaud you trying to help and trying to enhance and increase response times; I don't think there's anybody here that disputes you with that. The problem is it should be done by a district to district basis. In East Quogue I only run 430 EMS calls a year, I'm not stacking calls. To put this type of burden really, and that's really what it is, on this County wide policy, in effect, on us •• I have three Chiefs, all three Chiefs are EMT, we're on scene in about three minutes as a Chief. We have an ambulance on scene in the average of three to six •• correction, on the road in three to six minutes. My geographical area is so big, it takes me up to 17 minutes to get on scene in some areas in my district because we are geographically that large. Your nine minute response with an ambulance on scene is going to put tremendous amounts of liability and possibly some legal issues with us, all right. If we have a hot call and it's on the furthest outskirts of our district, we all work together on the east end, we all monitor each other, we know what goes on, we immediately call a neighboring district if they're closer and they respond as well as us; it's all done, we work in cooperation with each other.

So again, to put this boiler plate, County wide policy in effect, you're hurting a great deal of us. We don't stack calls. You're putting into place this priority dispatching. I'll give you a good example, Councilman Bishop, about •• Legislator Bishop, about your priority dispatching. I just finished up a working fire at a trailer park, we activated with a second alarm, an ambulance call, male victim of a fall with an arm injury; I responded as the Chief, my ambulance responded and an engine responded. Fortunately, it was two blocks away because the arm injury was secondary to cardiac arrest. We were dispatched as a one-out-for-one response, these gentlemen and ladies in this audience know that's a non-emergency response, that is a no lights, no sirens, take your time in traffic response. Fortunately for the victim we were two blocks away finishing up a structure fire, he survived; we shocked him, he came back to life, we

survived that, that man survived, he's living today in the Hamlet of East Quoque and very happy. If that was a cold start, a one•out•for•one response with your priority dispatching, I don't think the outcome would be the same.

LEG. BISHOP:

Actually, Chief, I think Dr. Alicandro doesn't want a priority.

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

So again, it works on an individual basis. We don't have this problem out here, we all work together out here, Legislator. And I'm asking that it to be •• you know, come out on the east end, look at our stats, look at all the 7th Division, the 8th Division, the 9th Division stats, work with us individually; if you have a problem with a district work that district.

LEG. BISHOP:

You're under a misunderstanding. Dr. Alicandro doesn't want or REMSCO doesn't want priority dispatch; in other words, they say it's first come first serve, they don't want you to use the dispatch to reprioritize calls.

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

That's not what it says in the law, sir, it's mandated by you.

LEG. BISHOP:

That's something we're going to have to clear up. But I would agree with you about plain English, or the Councilwoman, I ••

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

There's many a doctors and physicians in this crowd, I'd love to know one that could raise their hand, I never met them in my life, they have no medical history on me, I can get a 30 second conversation and they can diagnose me over the airway.

LEG. BISHOP:

How ••

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

That's what happens.

LEG. BISHOP:

Well, they do it in Babylon also because they have to walk the people through.

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

It's geographics, sir, it takes me too long to get to areas in my district.

LEG. BISHOP:

How long •• that's what I want to know, how large is this district that you cover?

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

Square miles, quite frankly I don't know, but it takes me 17 minutes to get through the northern area and if the bridges are closed in the beach•front communities it takes me 16 minutes to get to the night clubs.

LEG. BISHOP:

How many departments are there in the Town of Southampton, corps, you know, ambulance entities?

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

I believe there's••

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

Ten fire departments, eight volunteer ambulances.

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

Eight ambulances, ten fire departments, and two are combined.

LEG. BISHOP:

Okay. And how big is the Town of Southampton?

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

A hundred forty•two square miles.

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

A hundred and forty•two square miles.

LEG. BISHOP:

So it's approximately twenty miles per entity, right; is that basically it?

COUNCILWOMAN KABOT:

Some are smaller, some are larger.

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

Now add this week, we just added 50,000 more people into our jurisdiction and you're going to put me on an alpha call; you know how long it's going to take me to get to that call? And if I wrap my car up on the way, who's liable? These are the problems that we face on the east end, you can't be just putting one policy meets all because you're going to destroy us, you're going to knock us out of business.

LEG. BISHOP:

Do you have the same offer as the Chief before who, again ••

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

Chief Hense, yes.

LEG. BISHOP:

•• if you have suggestions as counter proposals, that's exactly what we want.

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

As a Co•Chairman of the EMS, Southampton EMS, we would be willing and happy to work with you.

LEG. BISHOP:

Okay, so we'll be working together then.

CHIEF SELTENREICH:

Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay, thank you very much, Ed. Next speaker, Carl Schottenhamel.

CHIEF SCHOTTENHAMEL:

Good afternoon. My name is Carl Schottenhamel, I'm Assistant Chief and a paramedic with Hampton Bays Volunteer Ambulance. I'd like to preface my statement by also saying that I do not oppose a faster EMS response time; what I do oppose is the approach that's being taken to do so.

The east end of Long Island is a geographical, unique area with the feasibility of responding to alarms in nine minutes, next to impossible at times, even if an ambulance left the building the moment the call came in. Our districts are large and have numerous natural barriers that impede our response time. We have one bridge that connects Hamptons Bays to Dune Road where our district continues for miles, to get to the hospital we have to cross a bridge, there are only two roads that will get us to the western end of our district.

The summer season has started and the traffic conditions on our small roads worsen severely, not to mention the horrendous traffic caused by the U.S. Open this week which is also dumping an additional 40 to 50,000 people in our area a day. Hampton Bays Volunteer Ambulance has employed its own dispatchers during the past five years, their job is to generate a crew once a call is dispatched, their job is to make sure that the call is answered in an ambulance response, they keep statistics for our department on our response times, and that's not through the County. At night Hampton Bays has duty crews, a site crew that will respond to any call during the night time hours. During Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day weekends, the busiest on the east end, Hampton Bays has two dedicated duty crews all day and all night from the start of the weekend until the end of it.

This week for the U.S. Open, an event which started yesterday and will continue through Sunday, Hamptons Bays has a duty crew on duty 24 hours a day, that's seven days straight, and that's all being accomplished with volunteers. The press has published several articles over the past few years quoting response times of the east end ambulance districts, these statistics were apparently supplied to the precinct by the County. I have never seen more inaccurate and incorrect data on our response times; the reason for this is that the County does not have statistics for any department on the east end, nor have the time or effort been taken to acquire

any true or factual data on our response times. The east end of Long Island has operated on its own for many years. There's always room for improvement and no one is arguing that fact; the Town of Southampton and the Regional Southampton Town Advisory Committee are working together to improve that. And I'd like nothing more than to see people receive medical care instantly upon its request, but to threaten us with the loss of our insurance and our ability to operate as an EMS agency is not the way to go about it. EMT's already have a great liability getting in the back of an ambulance and taking care of somebody, and to add to this their liability, it's going to deter more people from volunteering and from becoming EMT's. No one is a hundred percent, whether paid or volunteer, but we're working our best to improve it the best we can and the east end of Suffolk County deserves a little better.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you very much for your comments.

LEG. LOSQUADRO:

Thank you .

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Peter Marks; again, you have three minutes.

CHIEF MARKS:

Good afternoon, Madam Chairman, Members of the Public Safety Committee. My name is Peter Marks, I'm the Second Assistant Chief with the West Hampton Memorial Ambulance which provides coverage for the area from Eastport to East Quogue in the Town of Southampton.

I'm here before you today to stand in opposition to this proposed legislation. I'd also like to preface my remarks by stating that neither I nor the Westhampton Ambulance in any way oppose the active goal of improving ambulance response times in the County of Suffolk. I'm here before you to speak in particular on the geographical challenges the east end agencies face that I and many of my fellow health care providers believe this legislation fails to consider. These challenges include limitations of roadway routes, expansive protection areas, protection areas that serve as barrier beaches, islands, peninsulas as well as many other remote areas. The five towns of the Peconic Bay region are simply not comparable to townships of western Suffolk; the geographic economic population dispersement differences are great and wide

ranging.

Legislating a mandatory nine minute response time for districts that can take between 15 to 30 minutes to drive across is simply not a viable answer. I would urge the committee to undertake an in•depth analysis on the incredible ramifications that this legislation could have on Suffolk County Emergency Services, in particular those agencies operating on the east end. I thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you. Next speaker Carl Goodman.

MR. GOODMAN:

Good afternoon. I'm Carl Goodman, I'm an emergency physician, I'm the Chair of the Suffolk Regional Medical Advisory Committee and I'm an EMS provider for 20 years. I would like to commend Legislator Bishop for introducing a resolution of accountability to improve ambulance response time. I would like to first recognize the many agencies that are taking the necessary steps to improve response time, not only individually but through cooperation with their neighbors. However, such measures must be broadly applied across our EMS region as human physiology does not vary by geography or by time of day.

In 1994 the State Emergency Medical Services Plan for the future states, "The mission of EMS in New York State is to provide timely and appropriate medical care to ill and injured, thereby reducing death and disability from sudden illness and injury." It's further stated that EMS shall use medically approved dispatch protocols and function under medical supervision." The first component states, "EMS shall exist as part of a seamless continuum of care and incorporate it into the overall health care delivery system." We still function in an era when rescue round•up and patient ping•pong still exists. These are practices who are traveling from one station to the next to complete an ambulance crew or passing the call from department to department until a crew is fielded. The measures taken by REMSco and REMAC serve to end this ill•advised practice.

The Federal Government is pouring billions of dollars into terrorism and disaster preparedness. We must first crawl before we can walk and walk before we can run. If we're expected to respond to the unthinkable, we must first be able to consistently responding to daily emergencies in a coordinated and seamless manner in which the plan for the future published

ten years ago advocated.

To this day, REMAC and REMSCo have published some guidelines and subsequently wrote those as protocols, there's been no alternative plan that's been proposed by any of those that oppose this. I urge you to take the necessary measures and provide the necessary resources to allow the mission and each of the components of the New York State EMS Plan for the Future to be fulfilled and the REMSCo and REMAC response, Mutual Aid and Dispatch Protocol to be implemented uniformly throughout Suffolk County. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you very much. Next speaker, Marion _Myra_.

MS. MYRA:

Good afternoon. My name is Marion _Myra_ , I live in the Copiaigue/ Lindenhurst area. On June 10th, in the morning, of 2003, I was experiencing symptoms of a stroke. My husband called 911 about 7:30 in the morning, he was •• the police responded very promptly, they were there within moments. However, he had to •• my husband had to call three times, each time he was told the ambulance was on its way. The police officer also called, he too was told the ambulance was on its way. However, the ambulance did not arrive until approximately a quarter after eight, I arrived at the hospital twenty after eight.

As most of you know, a stroke can be very •• oh, fatal for some; I was very fortunate in that it turned out to be a mini stroke, although we didn't know it at the time. Time is of the essence. It could have left me with disabilities, if I were undergoing a heart attack it could have been fatal. It was certainly a far cry from the goal of nine minutes. What we were really upset about was not only the nonarrival but being told the ambulance was on its way when obviously it was not. We found out there was no one available from Copiaigue, from Lindenhurst, the final response was from Amityville and they did get me over to Brunswick.

My husband, after our experience, called Legislator Bishop's office about two weeks after the experience telling him of the circumstance. And one thing I am happy about is that to hear hopefully some sort of legislation will be put forth to prevent this from happening and possibly preventing the loss of life. I am thankful for the volunteers, I know we couldn't go on without them, but where were they when I needed them? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you very much for coming down. David Brenner?

I would just like to correct the record. There is not a public hearing on this, it is not a local law. However, the Legislature does meet in Riverhead next Tuesday, there will be a public portion and anyone who wishes to can speak. So for those from the east end that wanted us to be in Riverhead, we will be there on Tuesday. You may begin.

MR. BRENNER:

Thank you. My name is David Brenner, I'm the Chairperson of REMSCo and a 27 year volunteer provider in the Suffolk County systems.

First I wanted to say that Suffolk REMSCO has been given State oversight of the EMS agencies in Suffolk County. We want the agencies to ask their PSAP's for the information that we've been talking about, all the data we've been talking about, because the PSAP's don't necessarily provide us with information but they are obligated to provide the agencies and the agencies, as part of our system, should have it available to them and available to us when we ask them for it.

I also want to say that there's a tremendous amount of misinformation surrounding our protocol and, therefore, around the legislation; and it would be very difficult to correct, I heard so much misinformation today. The protocol was established by a committee •• first of all, it was developed by a committee in REMSCO which has representation from all agencies or almost all agencies in the County, if not directly through other agencies that they belong to. REMSCO, in an effort to disseminate good information and to get information from all of the agencies, had last June a Best Practices Conference where we invited all of the agencies, they received gold •embossed invitations on the east end and everywhere else in Suffolk County to attend to find out what was working and what was not working and to provide us with your direct input so that we would directly have the input of the actual providers; if you attended we have it and if you didn't we didn't get it.

I believe that the County has a responsibility to support this quality of life issue for the residents of Suffolk County. The protocol was adopted by REMAC and REMSCO, it's easily achievable, easily achievable. Intelligent leaders will find a way to implement this protocol very inexpensively, almost without cost; the unfunded mandate does not exist, this is a very easily

achievable protocol.

I also want to correct the concept that we have a nine minute response time requirement; that is not the case, it is a goal. The response •• the only requirements are dispatch data, dispatch time, that if you can't muster a crew in two minutes for the worst calls, call somebody else, if you can't muster a crew in four minutes for other calls, call somebody else. Especially in the areas where you have long response times because the area itself makes it difficult; the longer you wait when eventually you cannot get out, the more extreme it is for the patient.

I just want to thank the Legislature for considering this kind of legislation. Anything you can do to support improve the response times would be terrific. And one last thing, this original idea came out in 1987, we've asked people to improve their response times, we asked them to think about it again two years ago and when little response occurred, when little change was forthcoming in response time, then it became a protocol. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you very much, David. Next speaker, Ken Logg.

MR. GLOGG:

Thank you. My name is Ken Glogg, I'm with the Montauk Fire Department and some of the districts, District 7 and Division 9, have adopted a resolution and it says, "WHEREAS, the volunteer EMS agencies in these districts have provided much needed medical response to residents in these districts in dire need, and WHEREAS these agencies are the Ammaghanset Fire Department, Bridgehampton Fire Department, East Hampton Village Ambulance Association, Montauk Fire Department, Sag Harbor volunteer Ambulance Corps, Southampton Village Ambulance, Southampton Volunteer Ambulance and the Springs Fire Department. And WHEREAS these agencies combine to respond to over 4,000 calls in their respective districts in 2003, and WHEREAS these agencies have met to discuss various issues of the REMSCO protocol that is embodied in the proposed legislation by your committee. Now therefore be it, one, RESOLVED that these agencies do strongly believe that REMSCO has not been able to demonstrate inadequate burden of proof indicating or demonstrating how the implementation of this system will improve our existing operations and enhance the quality of patient care on the east end. And two, RESOLVED that our perception of this protocol is it will not only be burdensome but a hardship on our resources and actually compromise patient care with the

potential to devastate a well-functioning system. And third, RESOLVED that we believe this proposal and protocol which was fostered by REMSCo's perceived problems based upon their inadequate and inaccurate data is unacceptable as written. And fourth, RESOLVED that we would welcome the opportunity within our east end EMS community and in conjunction with REMSCO, explore and/or identify any potential problem and to develop a plan that will, in our judgment, improve our response time of our agencies." And this was accepted by all of us.

One of the things that we have which is unique to us, we have one road in and out to the hospital, we only have one hospital that we can go to and that's Southampton. And on a call where we can't use lights or sirens or anything like that, on a Sunday night you might as well just pack an overnight bag because we're not coming back. There's no way in our district that we can even get across town let alone anywhere in nine minutes. So I don't know what the outcome is but when we met in 2002 with REMSCO and this all came about, we have not heard another word from them as far as, you know, what we can do to improve our response time. It's not that we're against a response time, it's just that two minutes in route and nine minutes on scene is just •• there's no way it can happen.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you very much, Ken. And thank you for coming in from Montauk. Susan Dayton.

MS. DAYTON:

Good afternoon, Madam Chair and Members of the committee. I'm Susie Dayton, I'm from East Hampton Village Ambulance and I'm the Captain and I have a letter that was from •• that we worked together on from Ammaghanset Fire Department, Bridgehampton Fire Department, ourselves, Montauk, Sag Harbor Ambulance, Springs Fire Department, Southampton Village and South Hampton Volunteer.

There has been controversy over several years with regard to ambulance response times in Suffolk County and more recently with the recent REMAC/REMIT regarding implementation of response protocols. While we on the east end, the south fork, are committed to developing methods that will improve our response times and enable us to serve our communities that constitute our districts, we do find a number of the items about the new protocol troubling and our concerns are listed below.

One, our communication dispatch is six different agencies from fire, EMS and police. These

multiple agencies who respond to multiple calls will now effectively be hampered by a tremendous amount of increased, non•essential EMS communications required by responding EMS crews who will need to call in en route or prior to leaving. We further believe that the call •in limit of two minutes whereupon a signal three for additional crew or a call from mutual aid, depending on the nature of the call, will be initiated is unrealistic and will put an undue strain on the current system with which we operate.

The new protocol is designed •• is based on average response times across the County. As you are well aware, New York State requires ambulances to be able to respond to 90% of their calls in nine minutes or less, that's the State guideline relating to actualities, not averages. Utilizing averages to determine that there are problems meeting State guidelines is onerous and can be heavily skewed in the adverse manner by the extremes. No one from REMSCO appears to have reviewed data from the agencies within this segment of the County to determine if we are unable to meet the State guidelines. Our agencies combined in 2003 to respond to over 4,000 calls within excess of 60% of these calls being answered in four months covering Memorial Day to the end of September. While the goal of the new protocol is designed to improve response times and patient care, REMSCO needs to understand and appreciate the simple fact that traffic in our towns and villages during these months is often at a stand•still. This traffic increase is a direct result of the resort nature of our area and the associated 50 or more percent increase in our population during this time.

Of all the calls answered during the summer months, the majority would constitute Alpha Bravo calls; an attempt to respond to these calls without lights and sirens would not be in the best interest of the people we serve. We basically transport on one main road to one hospital; as a result, this puts us in a unique situation, we have very little flexibility in choosing alternate direct routes.

If the true purpose of this protocol is to accomplish better response time and improve Suffolk County's ability to meet State response time, then within our districts we can see the policy is self•defeating; it would drive us well beyond the State requirements.

VICE•CHAIR O'LEARY:

Please sum up.

MS. DAYTON:

Okay, thank you. One thing. In conclusion, the members of the representing agencies applaud attempts to improve response times and patient care County wide, however Suffolk is a unique mixture of suburbia and rural and we would like the opportunity to work with REMSCO and Legislator Bishop down the road to discuss these things. Thank you.

VICE•CHAIR O'LEARY:

Thank you so much. Lawrence Montrose.

MR. MONTROSE:

I respectfully retract my permission to speak due to the fact that my distinguished colleagues have more than expressed my concerns.

LEG. BISHOP:

Excellent.

VICE•CHAIR O'LEARY:

Thank you. Joel Vetter. Joel Vetter? I'll ask one more time, Joel Vet Vetter. Okay, Edward Zimmerman.

MR. ZIMMERMAN:

Good afternoon, everybody. And thank you for this opportunity to speak. I would just like to point out something that the gentlemen from the east end have kind of honed in on and that's the geography, the PSAP's, the problems that it would cause for their system. Very few people here have advocated for the patient today. I think it's very important that we advocate for the patient, the taxpayer, the people that utilize the 911/EMS system.

Since 1987, Suffolk County has made attempts to improve EMS. They released a Suffolk County EMS task force back in that year which reported some deficiencies in the ambulance services in our County. Since that time, very little change has been promulgated to improve our mutual aid or our dispatch policies. The current and past management of our EMS agencies has done very little in this area also. The citizens and taxpayers of this County deserve to receive ambulance service in a timely fashion with the properly trained personnel on those ambulances to address any emergency that they may call for.

This is not an issue of paid versus volunteer or geography, my PSAP has states, mine doesn't,

this is about the patient, the person who makes the phone call, as this lady spoke before about her time of need which wasn't answered.

I applaud the efforts of REMSCO, REMAC, the REMSCO Response Committee who worked very, very hard in getting together what fragmented information they could get from the different PSAP's and from the different agencies in this County who provide EMS. The bottom line is that if the Suffolk County Legislature supports REMSCO and REMAC and passes a resolution that will enable us to improve the system, the patients will be adequately served. And also they are our taxpayers so we have to kind of remember the fact that the people that we are serving are the people that are paying for the service. It's not about volunteers versus paid, we have to allocate our resources to better serve the people that need. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you. Next speaker, John Hammond. Okay, I guess he left.

Drew Silverman.

MR. SILVERMAN:

Hello, everybody. My name is Drew Silverman and I am President to the Suffolk County Ambulance Chiefs Association. My association represents the 28 volunteer ambulance squads in Suffolk County and over 5,000 volunteer ambulance workers. I am also the Chairman of the Suffolk County Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services Commission. I would like to address the Legislature on the issue of ambulance response in Suffolk County.

Some have said or implied that the status of ambulance and emergency medical response in Suffolk County is in a state of emergency; I am speaking today to dispute that claim. I have been a volunteer ambulance provider and a New York State Emergency Medical Technician for nearly 25 years. I served as Chief of my ambulance company, the Huntington Community First Aid Squad, in 1989 and 1990. I also served on the Board of Director from 1998 to 2001, as President and Vice•President. Some have claimed today that the leadership of the volunteer fire and ambulance services have been stagnant in addressing problems of ambulance response for over 15 years; I can say that that claim is completely false. Many volunteer fire departments have addressed their ambulance staffing and response issues by creating rescues companies within the fire department, whereas male and female members can join up and volunteer without being trained firefighters. Many volunteer ambulance companies have in •house/on duty crews, many squads have aggressively recruited new members from the

community, meeting with civic groups, high school students, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, seniors groups and so forth. Other squads have been and continue to share resources between the agencies.

Over the past several years the volunteer fire and ambulance service have upgraded the ambulances, their training and their equipment to meet New York State certification standards and protocols as governed by the State Department of Health, not the County. Almost all of the volunteer agencies provide advanced life support medical interventions with highly trained volunteer members; these volunteers have trained in excess of 140 hours to become basic level New York State Certified Emergency Medical Technicians so they can meet these basic standard of care requirements. Still, many others have gone further and trained an additional 200 to 300 hours to become State Certified Advanced Life Support Providers of Paramedics so they can administer life saving drugs and intravenous fluids in the field.

I am a voting member of the Suffolk County Regional EMS Council. When this issue of ambulance response first came to light in 2002 by the Response Committee led by Dr. Alicandro, it was discussed at length and agreed upon that the then proposed ambulance response standards would have the status of a response goal or recommendation, now they want to enact County legislation. Since 2002 I dispute the claim that ambulance response in Suffolk County has not improved, I know of many volunteer fire and ambulance squads that have improved their operations and response times. The presentation made by the REMSCO Response Committee to this Public Safety Committee back in November of last year was flawed. The data they used was from the years 2000 and 2001 so, therefore, did not reflect ••

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Sum up, please.

MR. SILVERMAN:

•• upon the response improvements made by many of the fire departments and ambulance companies. Furthermore, the data they used also did not include or calculate the on•scene time of Suffolk County Police Officers who are trained as New York State Certified Emergency Medical Technicians. The ambulance response time standards that the Suffolk Regional EMS Council has passed, that this body is considering to make part of County Law, has not yet even been tested or proven, there has been no pilot program proposed, enacted or utilized, therefore there is no proven data that these standards and protocols will even work within our volunteer•based

EMS system. Furthermore, the notion of penalizing a volunteer EMS agency that does not comply by taking away the County•provided million dollar liability coverage is preposterous; if anything, this million dollar policy should have been increased across the board to at least \$2 million since it has not been increased ever since 1981. I'm almost completing.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Okay, thank you.

MR. SILVERMAN:

Another factor to take into consideration is that REMSCo's cookie cutter approach to solving the perceived problems with ambulance response is unrealistic. Response times vary from district to district, north shore to south shore and west end to east end. Of course the patient comes first, but the volunteer•based EMS system is the only system we have in place in Suffolk County and it is made up of dedicated men and women who have devoted their time and their lives to providing an invaluable service to the community. I implore the County Legislature not to enact legislation that could hurt or hinder operations of the 110 volunteer fire departments or 28 volunteer ambulance companies in Suffolk County. The status of the volunteer EMS system is better and stronger than it was when I first started as a volunteer 25 years ago, this is a fact.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you very much, Drew. I appreciate you coming down. Next speaker, Anthony Lafarera.

MR. LAFARERA:

I'm Anthony Lafarera, Town of Babylon Fire Chiefs Association, also the Town of Babylon rep for FRES. I didn't bring my cookie•cutter, I promise you.

In reference to the protocol and the piece of legislation, the protocol is passed, legislation passes, we in the fire and EMS service, which one do we follow? Does the protocol take precedence or does the piece of legislation take precedence; which do we follow?

LEG. BISHOP:

Oh, okay.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Legislator Bishop.

LEG. BISHOP:

The legislation adopts the protocol, so they mirror each other.

MR. LAFARERA:

Okay. And you're looking to change •• you're looking for changes in your legislation, right, so they would have to change their protocol.

LEG. BISHOP:

No.

MR. LAFARERA:

No? You're going to have to follow one or the other, correct?

LEG. BISHOP:

If you do it that way then you would have to change.

MR. LAFARERA:

I just want to know which one to follow.

LEG. BISHOP:

Anthony, we had this conversation at ••

MR. LAFARERA:

Well, I want to bring it out to everybody and ask anybody else for their input; which one do we follow? We want to do the right thing here for the patient and everybody else here.

LEG. BISHOP:

What we want to do is what we're working on in the Town Chiefs which is we're going to continue to try to come up with something that you can work with.

MR. LAFARERA:

You would have to work with Dr. Alicandro with this, too, right?

LEG. BISHOP:

Of course.

MR. LAFARERA:

Okay. And I just have ••

LEG. BISHOP:

We're making progress, are we not?

MR. LAFARERA:

I sure hope so. And my other question is Dr. Henry talked about managing resources and in the protocol it talks about first responders, and I'll go back to what Drew Silverman said; there are people that sit with us in the firehouse, they're New York State Emergency Medical Technicians, and we all know them as Suffolk County Police Officers, and I sure hope •• in Ms. Myra's case, thank God she's all right •• that those Suffolk Police Officers that she said were doing so good in the house weren't EMT's. That's all I have to say.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you very much, Anthony. Next speaker, Margaret _Feamano_.

DR. _FEAMANO_:

Good afternoon. My name is Dr. Margaret _Feamano_ . And firstly, I would just like to thank everybody who is working on improving the ambulance response times, it's an issue that's very personal to myself and my family. My mother was a victim of a delayed EMS response time in 1999. My mother's name was Catherine Combatti and she lived in Patchogue and she I just wanted to relate her story to you to underline the importance of the work that's being done here.

November 22nd, 1999, my mother placed a call at 4 AM to the •• a 911 call, she was complaining of shortness of breath and chest pain.

About ten minutes after the call was made a police officer arrived and was helpful in the house, but my mother had decompensated and a second call had to be made to EMS. The ambulance did not arrive until about 50 minutes after the call was placed, at which time she suffered a

cardiac arrest and she never recovered from that; she died in Brookhaven Hospital November 26th, 1999, and I'm just here basically to hopefully prevent that from happening to anyone else in the future.

The issues that we were told surrounded the delay in the emergency response time was that the North Patchogue Fire Department was unable to respond and they had to locate a Medford response team who came after that. I understand also being a physician the sacrifice and the hard work that the volunteers in EMS are working under, I appreciate that, I just would like to underline the fact that we do need a system in place that could prevent this from happening again. Thank you.

LEG. LINDSAY:

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you for coming down. Last speaker, Hazel Hayes. I just need to announce that there was a public hearing scheduled for the Public Works Committee, that was scheduled to start at three o'clock; naturally there's been a little bit of a delay and it will be starting momentarily. Hazel?

MS. HAYES:

Good afternoon. My name is Hazel Hayes. I came down to relate what happened to me and my family. On May the 24th around, I guess around a quarter after five in the morning, my granddaughter called me and told me she wasn't feeling well and she was spitting up, I told her to call 911. When I got to the house, because we don't live •• we live fairly close. When I got to the house, she was sitting on the ground and the police officer had came and was trying to administer oxygen to her, she jumped up and she said "Oh, Grandma," she said, "my arm, I can't lift my arm." So about 20 minutes I asked the officer what time is the ambulance coming, he said the ambulance don't start working until six o'clock in the morning. My child was trying to get some relief, we don't know •• I mean, you know. And when I said, "Well, let me go, let me take her to the hospital," he told me that, "If you take her it will be your responsibility and if anything happens to her you will be at fault. " So meanwhile I jump into my van, I was going to get one of the girls that ride on the ambulance, and as I was going for her the first response had started coming up there but it hadn't •• you know, it hasn't been six o'clock. So I wanted to find out, does it •• if you get sick in the night or in the morning and for them to tell you that

your fire department, ambulance don't start working until six o'clock, that is terrible. She died the 24th of May and left two children, an 18 month old little girl and a five and a half little girl; now that child has been robbed of her, she'll never know her mother. And to see her out there laying out there, that is terrible. Any time or place, you don't know when sickness is going to hit you and if sickness hits you, you cannot place a time or no, you can't get sick this time because there's no help for you. But as I understand with having 24 hour ambulance service up there, which I hope me nor my family have to use it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you for sharing your story and sorry for your loss. We have one other speaker who promises to be extraordinarily brief.

LEG. BISHOP:

On this issue?

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

No, no other speakers on this issue.

LEG. BISHOP:

May I just make a brief statement?

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Legislator Bishop, sure; brief statement, go ahead.

LEG. BISHOP:

The next hearing at the Legislature is the public portion and I won't be able to speak at that time, so I just want to put some things on the record. As I said earlier, I have been meeting with departments and dispatch agencies over the last few weeks and there clearly is a desire on the part of the volunteer system to do things that will make the system better to make changes, and not all of the problems are within their control. Suffolk County Fire, Rescue Emergency Services Dispatch, with its relationship to the PSAP in the Town of Babylon, there are problems there that need to be addressed and I will be taking those up with them in the weeks ahead. There is a problem throughout the County with medical providers; for example, we have a HIP center in North Babylon which already this year has called for an ambulance over

40 times. Those type of medical providers should be made to use private ambulances, particularly since it is an intermedical facility transfer which is sanctioned to have a private ambulance so we need to work with •• to reform the system to address that.

There are clearly too many calls that are of a non•emergency nature and are known by the caller to be of a non•emergency nature and the caller is simply using an ambulance as a medical taxi, and we need to address that as well and to educate the public not to do that.

And then there are delays that are caused at the hospital where the hospital's bureaucracy itself causes the ambulance crew to stay at the hospital too long. And I was pleased that when we brought this up just last week with Good Samaritan Hospital, they have changed their policy but there are other hospitals in the County that perhaps and most likely have a similar problem. So there are many problems that are outside of the volunteer system and we need to address them. But within the volunteer system, I believe that we need to work with the volunteers on improving their communication. Clearly that's what REMSCO has in mind with this call•in system, which is not really a call•in system but a crew ready system. There needs to be knowledge at the time the call is made of who is ready to go and who is not. We need as a government to reward dedicated volunteers better so we can recruit more and the volunteer services need to pool their resources when they have clear holes in the system, and the data collected needs to be uniform and understood so that we can make the changes necessary.

Over the next two months, between now and the autumn, I plan to continue to work with the volunteer community on my end of the County, on the east end, but what I will not do is allow this status quo to continue. And I think that my colleagues have indicated to me that they feel similarly, that we need to do something. This legislation I hope will change greatly but positively and that in the end we will have improvements in the system so that we don't have more stories like the last one that we heard. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you, Legislator Bishop. There was one more speaker; Elie, please, because we were supposed to have a public hearing at three o'clock and we are almost at 3:30.

MS. SEIDMAN•SMITH:

When things work well they work very well and I want to thank you for 1615, but I also wanted to state for the record, because this is very important for me, that it couldn't have come about without the head of Probation, John Desmond, working tirelessly with us to get this passed so that we could help the citizens of this County in this quality of life issue trying to irradiate graffiti, gang graffiti especially.

And as you can see, we're passing around the pictures of what we've done. The 1st Precinct needed us immediately, we were there within a day, for their memorializing ceremony for their police officers that have passed away and we're there 24/7 trying to work every day. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you very much.

MS. SEIDMAN•SMITH:

Especially the Legislators for being there for all of us.

CHAIRPERSON CARPENTER:

Thank you, Elie. The meeting is adjourned.

(*The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 P.M.*)

***Legislator Angie Carpenter, Chairperson
Public Safety & Public Information Committee***

_ _ • Denotes Spelled Phonetically